

## INTRODUCTION

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Four years ago, the editorial board of the journal SEMATA decided to devote a special issue to gender studies. This idea came as a recognition of their consolidation in the general context of the humanities, the growing number of researchers working within this field, and their interdisciplinary character. Even if four years ago the planning of such a publication was still received with a certain reticence from some sectors, today the situation is much different. Gender, feminist and women studies are a common part of the university curriculum (BA's, Masters, graduate courses, postdoctoral degrees) as well as the focus of centres of research in Social Sciences and the Humanities, which have been founded in many Spanish universities. Gender studies have also become important in the context of applied social sciences, such as development programs - a sector that employs a growing number of professionals and social workers, such as equality agents, who require a specialization on gender studies. Many universities have opened departments devoted to issues of gender equality in order to develop plans to achieve these goals.

The current situation has not happened overnight but has been the result of a long and difficult process - a process that we want to acknowledge here by recalling places, moments, and, specially, the people involved- For this reason, the editors of this issue of SEMATA have decided to include three essays (one for each section, Geography, History, and Art History) that analyze the state of the question in order to evaluate the progress that has been made, and also, to map out the work ahead. The authors of these essays present a thorough overview of the development of research in gender, feminism, and women's studies, pointing to the different milestones reached in different countries and schools introducing the most influential scholars, and outlining the new methodological approaches, sources and themes of investigation.

This volume is divided into three large disciplinary sections: Geography, History, and Art History.

The Geography section comprises six articles. In *¿Espacios asexuados o masculinidades y feminidades espaciales?: Hacia una geografía del género*, M<sup>a</sup> Dolors García Ramon - a pioneering scholar in gender studies and Geography in Spain and current director of the Research Group in Geography and Gender at the UAB - examines the development of studies of gender and geography in the international scene, which is largely dominated by Anglo-American scholarship. The author, however, emphasizes the important, and often forgotten, role played by research conducted in the Hispanic world. The first part of the article discusses different paradigms dominating the study of the geography of gender, as well as the various approaches which, originating in the geography of gender, have contributed to the theoretical and methodological advance of the discipline at large. The second part is devoted specifically to the development of this approach in Spain, outlining the different lines of investigation, introducing pioneering research groups and their different contributions. Especially valuable is the bibliographical overview of scholarship related to the issues discussed in the article.

In *Construyendo puentes teóricos entre geografías: género e infancia*, Mireia Baylina, Anna Ortiz and Maria Prats focus on a specific field related to the geography of gender: the geography of childhood. The authors point to the conceptual and methodological connections between both geographies, emphasizing their common concerns: the recognition that gender and childhood are social constructs, and the need to apply methodologies that give voice to the protagonists (women and children). This essay also offers an overview of the current state of a growing line of investigation: childhood studies with a focus on the geography of gender.

The next two articles offer different approaches within demographic studies. In her discussion of the question of immigration of women in Spain, *Inmigración femenina en España y relaciones de género*, Concepción Domingo demonstrates that any study of immigration must necessarily consider gender, due to its influence in fundamental aspects such as: origin and destiny of migratory movements, factors that motivate them and those that mitigate them, labour questions that come into play, etc. She analyzes a wealth of statistical demographical data of the immigrant population, which allows her to present a critical view of the Spanish reality - a reality that is often distorted in the media and just given superficial coverage. She has conducted many interviews as part of her study, heeding the need expressed in this issue to give voice to the protagonists.

In *La feminización de la vejez en Galicia*, Julio Hernández Borge focuses on the question of aging as it pertains to the Galician population, paying special attention to the territorial distribution of this phenomenon. Gender studies can help understand the causes and consequences of the endemic process of aging experienced by the Galician population. The author analyzes aspects such as retirement pensions, which reveal a general phenomenon: the feminization of poverty in the context of aging populations.

The following two articles focus on rural communities. In *Propiedad rústica en el nordeste de Castilla y León desde una perspectiva de género*, Francisco Feo examines a specific aspect of the geography of gender: women's rights to own land. Focusing on the FAO, the author demonstrates that access to rights of ownership of the land determines the integration or exclusion of women in rural communities. Even if women are increasingly becoming heads of the family in rural communities, rights of ownership of the land are not always granted to them. For this study, Feo Parrondo examines patterns of rural ownership in fifty counties of the provinces of Burgos, Palencia and Soria.

In his article, *El papel de las mujeres en la diversificación de actividades económicas en una comarca rural de Cataluña: el caso del Pallars Jussá*, Cànoves y Blanco examines a case study focusing on the role of women entrepreneurs in the economic development and revitalization of a Catalan county. Higher demands for commodities that improve the quality of life, such as access to leisure and food, are providing alternatives to stop the process of depopulation in rural communities and, specifically the migration of women and youth.

All six articles in the History section are written by scholars of the University of Santiago, focusing primarily on the early Modern and Contemporary periods. Serrana Rial, author of an award-winning doctoral thesis on the integration of women in the Galician economy at the end of the Ancien Régime, took on the difficult task of providing an overview of the current state of research in the history of women. It needs to be taken into consideration that, for many years, the field of the history of gender had to endure a skeptical view from the larger academic establishment and was obliged to undergo a process of theoretical definition in order to meet certain predetermined demands of 'scholarly rigor' - demands that, it is worth pointing out, had not been made of other fields, such as the history of childhood, the history of aging and others. After a long process in which the history of gender had to struggle towards the definition of its theoretical premises, adapting methods primarily from social history - rather than economic or demographic history, it has finally achieved its long overdue recognition. Today, it is practiced by a large community of scholars of very diverse backgrounds - history, sociology, linguistics, law, etc - who tend to find common thematic points of encounter rather than clustering in particular schools. The Spanish Association of Historical Research on Women was born in 1991 with the goal of promoting interdisciplinary dialogue. Since its creation, the Association has achieved important objectives such as the organization of a biannual multidisciplinary conference - the last one celebrated in Santiago de Compostela -, as well as the foundation of the journal *Arenal*. Due to their quantity and diversity, it is difficult to offer a fully satisfactory summary of the results of the research. For this reason, Serrana Rial has chosen to sketch, from a critical perspective, the general lines of the historiography of gender, signaling the milestones in its development, the hurdles encountered along the way, and the lacunae still remaining.

Of the research articles included in this section, the first one, in chronological order, is Antonio Presedo Garazo's *Los logros materiales y simbólicos de una mujer noble en*

*Galicia a comienzos de la Época Moderna* - an in-depth study of the figure of doña Violante de Andrade (c. 1484-1538). A specialist in the history of Galician nobility, Presedo Garazo focuses on the House of Andrade to analyze the role of aristocratic women in the perpetuation of aristocratic lineages in Galician at the beginning of the early Modern period. Using documentation of the house of Andrade in the Archivo Historico Universitario de Santiago and other Galician archives, and combining approaches of social history and micro-history, the scholar presents a specific case study, that of doña Violante, as representative of larger patterns of behavior within her social group. He examines how doña Violante played a role in the perpetuation of her original lineage and the lineage into which she married, and how she actively participated in decision-making in issues affecting her and her social group, in relation to the fact that, according to her birth - she was the daughter of Diego de Andrade and sister of don Fernando de Andrade, first count of Villalba - her destiny had been predetermined by her lineage, obliging her to marry don Pedro Bermúdez de Castro, head of the *mayorazgo* of the House of Montaos.

A different approach is taken by María del Carmen Saavedra in her article *Mujeres y militares en Galicia durante la primera mitad del siglo XVII*. It is a study of an important group of women with very specific issues and challenges - women with husbands in the military in the 16th century. The author, a specialist in military and political history, has conducted research in Galician parish and municipal archives, and notary records in specific towns with significant, military contingents in order to study the situation of women who are dependent of military men who are assigned to Galician jails. Despite the difficulty of retrieving information on these women, who are often obscured by their husbands in the archives of the Ancien Régime, M. C. Saavedra has managed to ascertain their origin, occupations, economic standing and freedom of activity. The author concludes that the marked hierarchy that defines the life of men in the military realm permeates into the lives of their wives. This is a defining trait in these group of women, although, in the Galician case, they seem to have had a higher degree of autonomy, maybe due to the fact that military establishment in this region was largely free of immediate calls for duty.

Two of the articles focusing on the Contemporary period study the cases of women subjected to political repression during the Spanish Civil war. In *Género y compromiso. Estudio de la represión judicial ejercida sobre la mujer a raíz del estallido de la sublevación militar del 20 de julio de 1936 en Lugo*, María Jesús Souto studies the records of military tribunals and penitentiary archives in order to situate the protagonists of this study in the context of the Civil War and its accompanying dynamics of repression. This question has been largely neglected in Galician historiography and, therefore, M. J. Souto, in order to offer a more complete and general perspective on the phenomenon of repression, undertook the task of examining the repression against women in the larger context of the Franco's regime. In 1936 women had a low political profile and, in Lugo, left wing activists belonged to the working and rural classes while upper social classes remained largely undefined ideologically. For this reason, official repression was marginal - ideological persecution using extra-official mechanisms destined to denigrate the

women dissenters - and, most of the prosecuted women played a secondary and passive role. They were only considered in their role as mothers and wives and, if they stepped outside those roles, it was blamed on the obedience owed to a man that controlled them. In the few cases in which they were perceived to have acted following their own will, they were harshly prosecuted and severely penalized with an exemplary intention.

María Luisa Pazos's *Mujeres exiliadas en México: gallegas de Tabeirós y Terra de Montes* focuses on women driven into exile to flee from repression. This article, written from the perspective of a historian specializing in American studies, could be classified within the histories of life, an approach that has shed much light into the history of women. The author uses diverse sources, in typology and origin. With the exception of some direct personal testimonies, these sources are mostly narrative in nature resulting also in a study that adopts a narrative framework. The article illuminates the experience of a group of women who were driven into exile after the Civil War in order to escape repression. Most of them did so in their condition of wives, although later, they came to play important roles in their own right. This study moves between two specific geographical locations on both sides of the Atlantic: an area of western Galicia traditionally characterized by the large migration to America, and, on the other side of the ocean, Mexico, a country that was generous in offering haven for Spanish exiles.

The History section concludes with the article *Embriaguez y violencia de género* where Xavier Castro, a specialist in the history of consumption and daily life, examines a topic of pressing currency, the relationship between alcohol consumption and gender violence. Using documentation that ranges from news articles to judicial and medical reports, the scholar reflects on the historical evolution of the social classification of male alcoholism - evolving from a time where alcoholics were considered immoral and driven by vice to a time when they are considered clinical drug-addicts, - a change in perception and terminology that has, however, obscured an underlying issue, which is the abuse of women provoked by excessive alcoholic consumption. This social dichotomy was recognized late, if at all, by the law, which moved from punishing only public consumption of alcohol when it led to public unrest - without considering the unrest that drunkenness caused in the domestic environment - to consider it as an attenuating circumstance in the demand for responsibility, and, in many cases, as an attenuating circumstance in issuing sentences when men incurred in punishable crimes. In these circumstances, women were left unprotected legally or socially. It is clear that there is an important task ahead in order for women to overcome many hurdles and challenge still operating in contemporary society, much like the task to reconstruct their history.

The original plan of this volume would require the inclusion of an essay on the state of the question for the Art History section. However, taking into consideration the large number of recent publications about this subject, such as *Arte y feminismo*, H. Reckitt y P. Phelan (eds.), London, 2005, and *A Batalla dos xéneros. Catálogo da Exposición. Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea*, J. Vicente Aliaga (ed.), Santiago de Compostela, 2007, Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras decided to limit her essay on the present of feminist discourse

in the History of Art to the medieval period and, particularly, to the study of the medieval representation of the female body. In her article *De la cabeza al corazón: cuerpos femeninos, arte contemporáneo e historia de la cultura medieval*, Sánchez Ameijeiras analyzes specific examples to illustrate her discussion of the ways in which modern feminist aesthetic sensibilities has contributed to radical changes in the approaches to medieval art in the last twenty years. Indeed, the most influential historians of medieval art and culture have focused their attention on issues such as the body and organic and corporeal metaphors, and, transcending the dichotomy male/female, have proposed an androgynous or asexual view of the divinity.

The next two studies included in this section are, to a certain extent, complementary. In *En el balcón, en el palco, en la galería. Estrategias de la mirada en la arquitectura del siglo XIX*, Jesús Sánchez García - a specialist in the 19th-century architecture - focuses on three spaces specially designed for women in order to analyze their different strategies of the gaze. The author employs methodologies formulated by in the context of visual studies by scholars such as Hal Foster and Laura Mulvey. In addition to purely visual analyses, the scholar also studies literary texts by authors such as Juana de Vega, Fanny Garrido and Emilia Pardo Bazán in order to retrieve different female gazes: admiration from balconies, the curious female gazes from galleries, which tended to produce uneasiness in the passersby because of the uncertainty of being watched; and specially, the subtle interplay of gazes fostered within the structure of the theater - a play of gazes underscored by their interior decoration, such as the masculine gaze of desire directed to the balconies, which were designed and decorated almost as frames for the display of the female body.

In *Vividoras y Señoritas. Romero de Torres y Picasso en el burdel de la polémica y la vanguardia*, Francisco Javier Pérez Rojas, a specialist in late-19th-century and 20th century art from the University of Valencia, deals with 'other' gazes: the sad or provocative gaze of the prostitutes in a brothel, and the gaze of the painter who might, to a certain extent, feel a personal compromise to denounce their social situation. Having conducted a thorough documentary research, delving into a wide range of sources (academic records, press, literature, etc), the scholar reconstructs the paradoxical relationship between a painting by Romero de Torres, *Las Vividoras del Amor* and Picasso's famous *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*. Aesthetically worlds apart, these two paintings share, however, a common theme, prostitutes in a brothel, which allows Pérez Rojas to analyze them together in the context of the literary and visual traditions to which they belong: attitudes towards prostitution and prostitutes that emerged from artistic debates in the context of Academia. Part of this artistic debate on prostitution was even reflected in the genre of journalistic caricature - a genre that, in turn, played an important role in the birth of cubism.

Unlike the aforementioned essays, which dealt with women as passive subjects, or relegated to life behind curtains and screens, the following three contributions introduce active women artists involved in social struggle.

Manuel Núñez Rodríguez, whose scholarship has spanned medieval and modern art, deals with a fascinating German artist who has been neglected for a long time. In *La*

*mujer artista y sus circunstancias*: Kätthe Kollwitz, Núñez Rodríguez presents the oeuvre of this artist as an expressive testimony of her social and personal circumstances. He argues that her art cannot be easily framed in the context of the feminist movement but should be understood in the context of social engagement as a visual denunciation of the horror of violence and the suffering caused by war. It is in this sense, the personal expression of a mother who lost a son and a grandson in several military conflicts. Her use of an Expressionist visual idiom, which has been judged unfavorable by critics, is therefore, granted by her attempt to express her intimate pain and to denounce the horror inflicted on society by the Nazi government.

In *Cine en femenino: as mulleres no cine de I. Bollaín*, José María Folgar de la Calle and Rita Martín Sánchez examine the work of filmmaker Icíar Bollaín, another woman artist deeply engaged in the social reality of her time. The authors analyze the social circumstances, character definition and narrative strategies of three of her films: *Hola, ¿estás sola?*, *Flores de Otro Mundo*, and *Te doy mis ojos*. The three films repeat a similar narrative device, which is to open, in media res, right in the middle of a crisis involving the protagonists: young women from broken families in search of their destiny in *Hola*; women of different origins in the caravan of love in *Flores*; and the abused woman in *Te doy*. By focusing on the experience of these female characters, the films explore the diverse social and personal challenges affecting modern women: immigration, abuse, misunderstandings towards their active role in personal relations, etc.

The last two articles retrieve the theme of the essay that opened this section, the representation of the female body, but this time in a contemporary context.

In his essay *De mujeres y máscaras. Lo grotesco y la cuestión del género en el arte actual*, Miguel Anxo Rodríguez González, who has worked on women photographers, points to the common presence of deformed portraits (of female photographers and homosexuals) in modern photography, as a way to explore issues of gender and identity. He examines the roots of this phenomenon tracing them to the history of art and also within feminist theoretical discourses - specially the work of Judith Butler - that point to a third way in the representation of gender. Bringing into the discussion of the Nietzsche concept of the 'mask' and Bakhtin's concept of the carnival, the scholar concludes that, when applied to the artist's own face, deformity and the grotesque function as formal strategies to criticize representational modes within a domestic and intimate context - an operation that finds its roots in the popular world rather than in high culture.

These masks serve to question other masks that disguise the female body, bombarded by constant advertisement offering different solutions so that the feminine body can conform to an ideal of beauty. The last contribution to this volume, *Corpos de seducción. A Imaxe da muller na publicidade e a citación postmoderna* explores this problematic. The author, a renknown specialist in advertisement and gender studies from the University of Vigo, focuses, with an ironic look, on the image of women in modern advertisement. She begins by outlining several types of women portrayed in advertisement, in order to trace their origin in other artistic fields informing marketing design. Through the analysis

of a group of advertisements that display female bodies, the author develops an interpretation with theoretical referents in Compagnon's idea of perversion and Genette's notion of intertextuality. She concludes that modern advertisement retrieves female stereotypes that originate in Ancient mythology, literature and the visual arts, simply actualizing them to promote a new 'universe of glamour' in the media.